



THE GENERAL COURT OF MASSACHUSETTS
STATE HOUSE, BOSTON 02133-1053

May 27, 2010

The Honorable Arne Duncan
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

On behalf of the Massachusetts General Court and the citizens of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, we are writing to express our enthusiastic support for Massachusetts' Phase 2 proposal to the Race to the Top Fund.

As you know, Massachusetts' students consistently outperform their national and international peers in the areas of reading, math, and science on multiple measures of assessment. We are extremely proud of our success to date, but also recognize that we have a tremendous amount of work to do to close persistent achievement gaps and ensure that each and every one of our students receives a high-quality education. In 1993, our General Court put in place a strong foundation through enactment of the landmark Education Reform Act, and this year our state legislature reaffirmed its support for education reform through groundbreaking legislation enacted in January 2010. The Legislature's support for *An Act Relative to the Achievement Gap* underscores our belief in providing meaningful intervention tools to address persistent underperformance in our schools, lifting charter school caps in our most challenged districts, and promoting innovation in all Massachusetts schools and districts. These are three essential steps Massachusetts is taking to achieve our educational goals and close achievement gaps.

The Commonwealth's Race to the Top proposal, coupled with the passage of the Achievement Gap legislation, will allow us to catalyze an ambitious second phase of education reform in Massachusetts. Our proposal emphasizes four ambitious and achievable goals: 1) attract, develop, and retain an effective, academically capable, diverse, and culturally competent educator workforce; 2) provide curricular and instructional resources that support teacher effectiveness and success for all students; 3) concentrate great instruction and support for educators, students, and families in our lowest performing schools and their districts; and 4) increase our focus on college and career readiness for all students.

The Commonwealth's proposal articulates a series of bold and innovative strategies to reach each of these goals that will not only be a powerful impetus for dramatic change in Massachusetts, but will also allow our state to continue to serve as a national model for educational improvement and reform.

We are grateful to you and President Obama for providing this opportunity to the Commonwealth, and we look forward to working to ensure *all* of our students receive a high-quality educational experience. On behalf of the Massachusetts General Court, we hope that you will grant your fullest consideration

to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Race to the Top proposal. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can provide additional information.

Sincerely,



Speaker Robert A. DeLeo
Massachusetts House of Representatives



President Therese Murray
Massachusetts State Senate



Representative Martha M. Walz
Chairwoman
Massachusetts Joint Committee on
Education



Senator Robert A. O'Leary
Chairman
Massachusetts Joint Committee on
Education